

Let's Get Kids Cooking Mini-Grant Program

November 19, 2012

Dear School Personnel and Community Leaders,

Thank you in advance for your interest in our Let's Get Kids Cooking mini-grant program. The purpose of this mini-grant program is two-fold. It will support nutrition education for Montana students in the area of cooking and food preparation skills. Secondly, it will provide an opportunity for children to learn about the *USDA Foods Programs*. *USDA Foods* are provided to school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program to help lower food costs in the school meals program while supporting US agriculture. Check out information about the USDA Foods Program at this web site:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/schcnp/default.htm>

This mini-grant program will support nutrition education for school-aged children through encouraging the development of cooking skills and exposure to nutrient-rich foods through tasty and healthy recipes. The *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* encourage children to enjoy a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, (including legumes and lentils), whole grains, lean proteins and low fat dairy foods for good health. We believe teaching children the skills to prepare healthy meals and snacks are a fun and educational opportunity to achieve this goal. We hope this mini grant program will make this a reality for many Montana children.

Through this competitive mini grant program, eight school districts will receive a \$500 mini grant to support the costs of conducting a children's cooking program. The cooking program can be done as part of the school day or as part of an after school program. School-based student clubs, organizations or groups are encouraged to get students involved as teachers or teaching assistants. School food service program managers must provide information on the USDA Foods Program and share some of their *USDA foods* for the recipes to be made in the cooking program.

Please share this letter and the application with interested educators, after school program coordinators, student club advisors, administrators, school food service personnel and community members. **Please note that the application deadline is January 7th, 2013.**

If you have questions or would like additional clarification, please contact me at (406) 994-5641 or by e-mail at kbark@mt.gov.

The application packet will be posted at the following web site:
http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School_Nutrition/index.html#gpm1_2

Sincerely,



Katie Bark, RD., LN
Project Director
Enclosures: Let's Get Kids Cooking Application

Denise Juneau, Superintendent • Montana Office of Public Instruction • www.opi.mt.gov

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